



A carnival of blue and white with the best of intentions

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The sun was not long up and up ahead somewhere a band was playing.

But it wasn't the dregs of a big Saturday night.

It was the start of a new Sunday and East Perth was alive with blue and white T-shirts, runners and good intentions.

They were all headed towards the WACA for the start of the HBF Run.

Getting there had meant a big sacrifice. I had declined a glass of red the night before, even though it would have been perfect with the pasta I ate to carb-load.

There was a carnival feel at the start and taking off the snug jumpers that had kept the chill at bay and putting them in the luggage drop meant it was nearly time to get serious.

Time to check laces were tight and the ipod headphones secure.

With a few minutes to go, I managed to attach to my head a camera to film for thewest.com.au.

Back in the crowd it took a while to get moving after the start, and it was not until Riverside Drive that I got into a good rhythm.

It didn't last long. I made an early grab at a drink stop and after having to weave back out into heavy traffic decided it was not worth the effort, and ran the risk of forcing a comfort stop.

Turning to film the river as I ran on the grass verge was not so smart and I nearly ended up collecting a signpost.

The bands and DJs along the way lifted our spirits, as did seeing the entrance to the Graham Farmer tunnel.

What is it about the tunnel?

As I ran into it the air filled with whoops and hollers, including a burst of "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie".

Leaving the tunnel took us up a slight incline which I had never really noticed in a car, but by the

time we turned back towards Belmont Park I felt we had broken the back of it.

Looping along the river at Burswood as the sun sparkled off the water was an absolute pleasure and the WACA, where we would finish, beckoned again.

As we swung right over the Causeway, a runner to one side made his fist into a ball when I asked how he was going. "My calf," he said, grimacing.

But the pace picked up as we made a last burst towards the entrance, and then it was out on to the grass to finish.

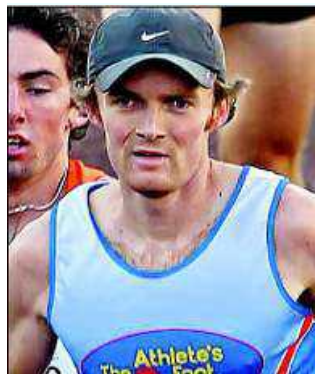
A bottle of water handed to me was most welcome, and on the shuttle bus to the train station complete strangers chatted animatedly about times, run rates and coming back next year.

And I'll be one of them.

 See video highlights at **thewest**



Triumph: Marc See won the 4km race.



Early leader: Sam Dobson



Fun: A runner gets in the spirit.

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Cooling off: Kate Sugars and Leanne Callcott enjoy some cold water after competing in the event.

Picture: Sharon Smith



And they're off: The start of the Run for a Reason event.



Ready to go: Runners prepare at the WACA for the start.



No age barrier: Peter Kennedy, 91.